

THE NUMISMATIC JOURNAL.

IN THE INTEREST OF COIN AND CURIOSITY COLLECTORS.

VOL. I.

NORTH ADAMS, MASS., AUGUST, 1877.

NO. I.

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SALUTATORY.

The collection of coins has been a favorite employment of antiquarians for many centuries. It is probable that in Greek and Roman times there were numismatic collections as numerous as in these latter ages; and not improbable that many of the fine specimens of ancient coins, adorning our modern collections have formed the ornaments of similar collections in Egypt, Greece, or Rome, more than a thousand years ago. During the past few years the mania for collecting old and valuable coins has extended over the whole country. But a few years since there were but few collections, perhaps twenty or thereabouts comprised all in America worthy of note. There are now twenty times that number and hundreds of small collections in the hands of our young friends, to whom the subject can well be recommended, both by parent and teacher. Although manias are not to be encouraged, we know of none more pardonable than the coin mania, and the pursuit of coin-collecting within limits, is to be approved. It is of material advantage to the student, and will help to fix dates and events in the memory, and prove a most important aid to historical research. There are many works upon numismatics, and a number of periodicals published, that are meeting with suc-

cess, which they deservedly merit. The increase of reliable periodicals has been nothing in comparison to that of collectors, whose growing wants demand greater facilities for obtaining useful information. It is our intention to make the Journal as interesting as possible, imparting all the information that can be gathered by diligent effort, that will be of service to the collector, in the clearest and most concise manner; enlarging our paper as soon as the patronage and wants of our readers shall demand. Our columns will be open at all times to any who will make such contributions as will be of general interest. We shall mention all coin sales coming under our notice, and give prices realized on such lots, as may be most interesting. No unreliable advertisements will be inserted, and in every way we shall aim to make the Journal *reliable*, and worthy of patronage. You can rest assured that *The Numismatic Journal* will be continued one year, beginning with this number. If you think this may be of interest to you, send in the price of subscription, and show this number to any one interested in the subject. While faithfully carrying out our promises, and with a liberal support from collectors, we doubt not of that success which is usually accorded to useful enterprises.

THE NEW COIN.

The coining of double eagles with the new dies has begun at the mint. In these dies there has been a marked improvement on the old style. The outlines of the face and hair of the representation of Liberty are more clearly defined. The head, instead of inclining to the right, is now perpendicular. In place of the words "Twenty D," "Twen-

ty Dollars" has been substituted, and the inscription, "*E Pluribus Unum*" has been enlarged. The upper range of stars has been extended to the halo, and the entire oval arrangement of stars increased in width. The coin is much handsomer than those cast in the old dies. The size and weight remain exactly the same.

SYMBOLS ON ANCIENT COINS.

The names of the deities represented on the reverses of Greek coins are never expressed, a symbolical representation of their attributes being all that they thought proper to delineate, but the Roman coins always express the name; frequently with an adjunct as *Veneri Victrici*, &c. In others the name of the emperor or empress is added as, "*Pudicitiae Augustae*" round an image of Modesty. "*Virtuti Augusti*" round an image of Virtue. The principal symbols of the divine attributes to be met with on the Greek coins or medals are as follows.

Jupiter is known on the coins of Alexander the Great, by his eagle and thunderbolts; but when the figure occurs only on the obverse of coins he is distinguished by a laurel crown and a placid bearded countenance.

Jupiter Ammon is known by the ram's horn twisting round his ear, a symbol of power and strength, assumed by some of the successors of Alexander the Great, particularly by Lysimachus.

Neptune is known by his trident, his dolphin, or by being drawn by sea-horses; but he is seldom met with on Grecian coins.

Appollo is distinguished by a harp, branch of laurel or tripod, and sometimes by a bow and arrows. In the character of the Sun, his head is surrounded with rays; but when the bust only occurs, he has a fair young face, and is crowned with laurels. He is frequently on the coins of the Syrian princes.

Mars is distinguished by his armor, and sometimes by a trophy on his shoulders. His lead is armed with a helmet, and has a ferocious countenance.

Mercury is represented as a youth with a small cap on his head, wings behind his ears, and on his feet. He appears also with the caduceus, or wand

twined with serpents, and marsupium or purse, which he holds in his hand.

Æsculapius is known by his bushy beard, and his leaning on a club with a serpent twined round it. He sometimes occurs with his wife Hygia or Health, with their son Telesphores, or convalescence between them.

Bacchus is known by his crown of ivy or vine, his diadem and horn, with a tiger and satyrs around him.

The figure of Hercules is common on the coins of Alexander the Great, and has frequently been mistaken for that of the prince himself. He appears sometimes as a youth and sometimes with a beard. He is known by the club, lion's skin, and remarkable apparent strength; sometimes he has a cap in his hand, and a poplar tree as a symbol of vigor is at times added to the portrait.

The Egyptian Serapis is known by his bushy beard, and a measure on his head.

Apis is delineated in the form of a bull, with a flower of the lotus, the water lily of the Nile, supposed by Macrobius to be a symbol of creation, and Jamblichus tells us, that Osiris was thought to have his throne in it.

Harpocrates the god of silence, appears with his finger on his mouth, sometimes with the sistrum in his left hand, a symbol common to most of the Egyptian deities,

Canopus another Egyptian deity, appears in the shape of a human head placed on a kind of pitcher.

The Holy Senate and Holy People appear frequently on Greek imperial coins, and are sometimes represented as old men with beards, at others as youths.

THE SHEKEL.

Among the several ancient coins found lately near Jerusa'em, were shekels and half shekels of Judea, which are considered by many to be the most interesting of all ancient coins. They are of silver, and belong to the time of the Great High Priest Simon Maccabeus. In spite of their great age, the coins are said to be in fine preservation, being perfectly legible.

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PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

The Curiosity Cabinet, published monthly by Wm. P. Brown, 145 Nassau St. New York. Vol. 1. complete, twelve numbers of this interesting paper will be sold at 30 cents.

From Mr. C. H. Bechtel, of 79 Nassau St, N. Y., his descriptive price catalogue of all known United States, and Foreign postage stamps, price 25 cents. Also circulars giving prices of revenue stamps, continental and colonial paper money &c. Mr. Bechtel is a large and reliable dealer, and collectors will find it to their advantage to correspond with him.

We received a file of The Numismatic Pilot, a large and interesting paper, published bi-monthly and mailed gratuitously, edited by Dr. Robert Morris, La Grange, Ky., who gives particular attention to the examination of ancient coins, furnishing complete readings and history of each coin.

We sent in our mite to the well known and popular numismatist, Mr. Ed Frossard, for a copy of his Numisma, a bi-monthly small quarto devoted to the interest of coin collectors and dealers, containing lists of coins for sale &c. Published at Irvington, N. Y. Price 50 cents per annum. in advance. We advise all our friends to do the same.

The American Journal of Numismatics, published by J. Colburn, No. 18 Somerset St. Boston, Mass., quarterly, at \$ 2. per annum. Every collector desiring useful and reliable aid in the study of numismatics, and is anxious to see the science progress, should subscribe for it.

We shall esteem it a favor if dealers in coins and curiosities will send us their catalogues, circulars &c. We expect to notice all such publications when received.

We have received numerous letters full of good wishes, and some of our friends have been kind enough to offer their assistance, showing our efforts are not wholly unappreciated. We take this opportunity to return our thanks, and hope all will promptly accept of our offer, taking advantage of our columns whenever they may have anything interesting to communicate.

GLEANINGS.

The study of Numismatography [says an English writer] is not of very ancient date. None of the classic writers give any account of collection of medals. We know that many of the coins of the Greeks were of excellent workmanship, and that they were admired and imitated by the Romans; but we do not find that they were made any scientific use of by either. The first among the Moderns who began the study of numismatography was Petrarch. Being desired by the Emp. Charles IV. to compose a book containing the lives of eminent men, and to place him in the list, he replied that he would do so whenever the Emperor's life and conduct deserved it. In consequence of this conversation, he afterwards sent the Emperor a collection of gold and silver coins bearing the representations of eminent men, and an address suitable to his former declaration. A collection of coins was made in the next age by Alphonso King of Arragon, but though this monarch collected all that could be found throughout Italy, there could not have been very many, as the whole were contained in an ivory cabinet, and carried always about with him.

Mr. O. M. GAINES of Colrairie, Mass., found among the ruins of the L part of his hotel, which he has recently torn down, an old Spanish coin of Philip V.'s time. On one side is the name, "Philippus V.," and on the other, "Hispaniarum Rex,"— the x in the last word having been rubbed out by use. The date is also gone, but as Philip V. came into power in 1700, and died in 1745, the coin must be from 126 to 150 years old.

Human nature has changed but little since the first money was made. The price of joy and of pain has been about the same since first humanity begun to deal pleasure and sorrow to each other. Every peice of ancient coins was in its turn the purchase price of bread and the purchase price of poison. It comforted want; it was flung away by the jeweled hand of profusion. It won at the board; it was the last stake of the suicide. In the morning it bought flowers for the brow of purity; in the evening it was the price of infamy and shame. — *Prime.*

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